Increase in rice quota for Kerala

48. SHRI THENNALA G. BALAKRISHNA PILLAI: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS. FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have received any request from the State Government of Kerala regarding increase of rice quota during the Onam festival season;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) what action has been taken in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (DR. AKHILESH PRASAD SINGH): (a) Yes Sir.

(b) A request has been received from the State Government of Kerala for allocation of an additional quantity of 71000 MTs of rice for the Onam festival.

(c) It has been decided to make one time special allocation of 21000 tons of rice at APL rates to the State of Kerala for the Onam festival during the month of August, 2007.

Building up foodgrain stocks in foreign countries

49. SHRI S.S.AHLUWALIA: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are planning to build up stocks of foodgrains in foreign countries in order to bolster food security; and

(b) if so, the details of the plan, including its genesis, the means and nature of procurement of stocks, funding thereof, names of countries where such stocks are proposed to be held, and the mechanism of Government which would be engaged for execution of the plan?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (DR. AKHILESH PRASAD SINGH): (a) and (b) No Sir, the Government has not taken any decision to build stocks of foodgrains in foreign countries.

Decline in procurement of rice and wheat by **FCI**

50. SHRI K. CHANDRAN PILLAI: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the procurement of rice and wheat by FCI has declined drastically this year;

(b) if so, the details of the procurement of rice and wheat by FCI;

(c) the reason for the decline in procurement;

(d) whether multinational companies are also procuring rice and wheat in the country;

(e) whether there is any restriction on quantity of procurement by such companies; and

(f) if so, the details thereof; and if not, whether Government would consider such steps alongwith the details thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (DR. AKHILESH PRASAD SINGH): (a) and (b) There is a slight decline in the procurement of rice by the Government Agencies (State Agencies and FCI) for the Central Pool in Kharif Marketing Season (KMS) 2006-07 (249.40 lakh tonnes as on 7.8.07 against 269.56 lakh tonnes in the corresponding period in KMS 2005-06). However the procurement of wheat has increased from 92.25 lakh tonnes in Rabi Marketing Season (RMS) 2006-07 to 111.04 lakh tonnes in RMS 2007-08.

(c) Procurement of rice in KMS 2006-07 has been less than KMS 2005-06 mainly on account of crop diversification and unfavourable weather conditions in some parts of Punjab, Haryana and U.P. resulting in less paddy arrivals in mandis.

(d) Data on procurement of wheat and rice by multinational companies is not maintained in this Department.

(e) and (f) No restriction on quantity of procurement by multinational companies has been imposed by the Government of India. However, a notification titled "Wheat (Stock Declaration by Companies or Firms or Individuals) Order, 2007" has been issued under the Essential Commodities Act, 1955 on 1.3.2007. The order provides that any company or firm or Individual who purchases wheat beyond 50,000 tonnes during 2007-08 shall furnish to the Central Government a return indicating the name/address of the company, quantity of wheat purchased and quantity of wheat held in stock.

Procurement by private companies in Punjab

51. SHRI ABU ASIM AZMI:
SHRI AMAR SINGH:

Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that private companies have purchased wheat in Punjab much above the rate fixed for procurement by Government;

(b) if so, what are the details of the quantity purchased by them and at what rate; and

(c) how much quantity has been purchased by the State Agencies and at what rate and what was the target fixed by them for the procurement of foodgrains during the current year?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (DR. AKHILESH PRASAD SINGH): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) FCI has informed that a quantity of 6.90 lakh MTs of wheat has been purchased by the private companies/traders in Punjab at rates between Rs.850 to Rs. 1050 per quintal.

(c) Since procurement of foodgrains under Minimum Support Price (MSP) operations carried out by Government agencies is open ended, no targets are fixed. However, based